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**Name of Organization:** Metroparks of the Toledo Area

**Type of Organization:** Sub-state or Special Purpose District

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Development

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**Project Title:** Wild! A Video Celebration of Natural Treasures of NW Ohio

**Project Category:** Habitat (Ecological) Protection and Rest

**Rank by Organization (if applicable):** 0

**Total Funding Requested (\$):** 115,000 **Project Duration:** 1.5 Years

**Abstract:**

Metroparks of the Toledo Area, in collaboration with broadcasting network Fox36, proposes a new weekly 30-minute quality television program to serve as an outreach project, encouraging the community to practice sound environmental ethics in their daily lives: reduce, reuse, recycle and ultimately protect the Great Lakes region's natural habitats. The program will be designed to target all ages, races, national origins and socioeconomic levels. This innovative concept will take the parks and natural areas into each and every household within Northwest Ohio and Southern Michigan. It will create awareness and education by combining fun with learning, recognizing that the imparting of "facts" is not as significant as the overall impact of promoting a positive attitude and sensitivity to the ecosystem for today's and future generations. Wild! will serve to broaden the on-going public education process already begun by the Metroparks through a wide-range of programs and services. Further, the program's mission will communicate the Metroparks and Great Lakes regions as vital areas of natural and historical importance, emphasizing the rich wetlands, unique oak savannas and rare plant and animal species. The planned 12 episodes will begin with the launch of a pilot program, which will be produced in Summer, 2000 and funded through a partnership among Fox36, Toledo Metroparks and local corporate sponsors. The episodes will air during prime time Saturday morning viewing from Fall, 2000 through the end of the year, reaching a broad audience viewership of 30,000+ households within Northwest Ohio and Southern Michigan. Following the airing of all 12 episodes, the programs will be available as video resources for free access to the community - schools, service organizations, businesses, church groups - this video library will be an invaluable resource for advancing on-going education, awareness and visibility, which is the overall mission of the program.

**Geographic Areas Affected by the Project****States:**

<input type="checkbox"/> Illinois	<input type="checkbox"/> New York
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Indiana	<input type="checkbox"/> Pennsylvania
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Michigan	<input type="checkbox"/> Wisconsin
<input type="checkbox"/> Minnesota	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ohio

**Lakes:**

<input type="checkbox"/> Superior	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Erie
<input type="checkbox"/> Huron	<input type="checkbox"/> Ontario
<input type="checkbox"/> Michigan	<input type="checkbox"/> All Lakes

**Geographic Initiatives:**

<input type="checkbox"/> Greater Chicago	<input type="checkbox"/> NE Ohio	<input type="checkbox"/> NW Indiana	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SE Michigan	<input type="checkbox"/> Lake St. Clair
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**Primary Affected Area of Concern:** Maumee River, OH**Other Affected Areas of Concern:** Lake Erie Western Basin Wetlands, Oak Openings Region, Great Black Swamp, Maumee Valley***For Habitat Projects Only:*****Primary Affected Biodiversity Investment Area:** Western Lake Erie/Oak Openings**Other Affected Biodiversity Investment Areas:** Maumee River Corridor**Problem Statement:**

For over 70 years, Metroparks of the Toledo Area has been acquiring land and preserving green spaces. Today the Metroparks now represents over 7,000 acres of high quality terrestrial ecosystems including 20 miles of riverine corridor within the Great Lakes region. With a diverse metropolitan population of more than 460,000 people, the nine area Metroparks receive well over 2 million visits annually. The Toledo Metroparks service area includes some of the Midwest's most significant and diverse natural areas including Lake Erie, Maumee Bay, wetlands, oak savannas and wet prairie. More state-listed species occur in this area than anywhere else in Ohio; yet this fact is little known and understood. The oak openings is a 22-mile lone, seven mile wide geologic region that is disappearing through suburban sprawl. More and more, natural areas are being parceled for commercial development. The challenge remains to seek the most effective means in which to broaden the community's knowledge and awareness of the outdoors and nature and find options for striking a lasting balance between development and preservation. To protect the environment, the message must be communicated that each individual is responsible for preserving their own parcel of green space. The private land owner must be encouraged to recognize their individual ownership in community land preservation. The continuing protection of the ecosystem is not possible without an on-going public education program - What better way to convey this message than through television - the medium for the masses. Wild! will answer the challenge.

**Proposed Work Outcome:**

With an objective to expand public education about the need to preserve natural areas and maintain the ecosystem for this and future generations, television stands out as the most effective medium to communicate to the largest and most diverse population at any one time. A series of television programs is being developed, highlighting the nine area Metroparks and relevant surrounding preserves, nature and historical sites. The program's overall goals will focus on education and entertainment, emphasizing the need for environmental protection and preservation. The programs will project the Metroparks and its facilities as vital, vibrant places full of fascinating sites, plants and animals to discover and learn from, for all ages.

Each 30-minute program will incorporate a number of fast-moving features focused on a central theme. Following are just some of the innovative programming ideas representing meaningful topics packaged in an entertaining manner: "When Good Trees Go Bad - Or Do They?" As trees die, they don't lose their usefulness. Dead trees are a good thing in a woodland. While standing, they become like an apartment house for all kinds of critters, and a food source for woodpeckers searching for the insects burrowing in the timber. On the ground they slowly decay, returning nutrients to the soil. At the same time, they provide a refuge for various fungi and mosses...The Black Swamp was a miserable place to travel, a worse place to live. One person braved the muck and mire, turning the plants of the Swamp to good. "Secrets of the Physician - Under the Mud with the Black Swamp Doctor"...It's the original "Wayne's World!" The Battle of Fallen

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Timbers pitted "Mad Anthony" Wayne and his forces against a confederation of native American tribes...They crawl underwater, under rocks. You might hate the way they look, but they tell us just how clean our water is. They know. They are the "Creatures from the River Bottom"...You get used to it covering the landscape in green. But when it goes, the leaves are changed forever. Join us as we investigate what happens "When Chlorophyll Leaves"...They reached the end of their ropes long ago, when highways were water. Barge into their lives with us as we investigate the secret lives of "Canal Boat Mules and the Men Who Drive Them"...They hunt on silent wings under the cover of darkness. They can track their prey by sound and strike without warning. They're great horned owls, "The Flying Tigers of the Night"...The landscape is frozen, locked in a seemingly suffocating blanket of snow and ice. But is it lifeless? Beneath the freeze, strange plants are heating up, butterflies emerge with each burst of warmth. Wildlife not just survives but thrives. Join us for "Survival: Life in the Deep Freeze"...

Each of the 12 programs will be 28:30 minutes in length, with internal commercial breaks built in. The general format will be as follows: (1.) 30 second open (2.) Show introduction (3.) Commercial break #1 (4.) Main story introduction (5.) Secondary story (6.) Nature quiz (7.) Commercial break #2 (8.) Main story (9.) Amazing facts (10.) Living history segment (11.) Secondary story conclusion.

Outcome of the series effectiveness will be measured in the following ways:

- (1.) Primary is viewership - Fox36 receives a national ratings list following each sweeps month (March and November) from the national Nielsen Ratings. The ratings book breaks down the number of viewers by age demographics.
- (2.) Determined increase in the number of hits to the Metroparks website - [www.metroparkstoledo.com](http://www.metroparkstoledo.com)
- (3.) Determined increase in on-site Metroparks programs participation by park visitors.
- (4.) Determined increase in Metroparks memberships
- (5.) Measurable increase in the number of individuals/organizations serving in park stewardship
- (6.) Increase in the number of program advertiser
- (7.) Increase in Metroparks donors/donations.

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<b>Project Milestones:</b>	<b>Dates:</b>
Solicitation of local sponsors/partners	04/2000
Devise program format/begin production	06/2000
Develop marketing plan/secure talent	06/2000
Production of pilot/subsequent programs	07/2000
Airing of tv pilot program	08/2000
Airing of first of 12 weekly episodes	09/2000
Final airing of last of series	11/2000
Evaluate viewership/programs impact	12/2000

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☒ Project Addresses Environmental Justice

**If So, Description of How:**

The Northwest Ohio, Southern Michigan regions are rich in diverse ethnic communities. Toledo Metroparks have always been places for everyone of all ages, races, national origins, socioeconomic backgrounds or physical challenges to use for recreational enjoyment and educational enrichment. The Metroparks is sensitive to every special population, and many of our programs are designed to address their specific needs. For example, grant dollars provide for bus transportation to bring children from economically challenged schools to the Metroparks through the Nature Express program; the Trail Partners program initiated by the Metroparks to assist individuals needing assistance with physical mobility on trails has been recognized by the Ohio Parks and Recreation Association and serves as a national model for state and city parks across the country. Tandem bicycles are available with volunteer drivers for anyone unable to navigate park paths on their own. Recently, Metroparks was given a special award for labor management cooperation by the Toledo Labor Management Citizens Committee. Wild! will carry the message that Metroparks of the Toledo Area continues its dedication to the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people.

☒ Project Addresses Education/Outreach

**If So, Description of How:**

The mission of the proposed Wild! television series is to provide expanded education about Toledo Metroparks for the purpose of promoting preservation and protection of our region's ecosystem. The series goal is to communicate that message to the greatest number of individuals using the most effective communication source available - television. Community outreach is the program's highest priority. It is the goal of the television series to reach the largest number of people of all ages, races, ethnic origins and socioeconomic levels and encourage them to take ownership in their environment for its protection and preservation of natural, open green spaces, animal species and significant historical sites.

Metroparks of the Toledo Area is confident and qualified to serve the community. Success with local program partnerships such as Nature Express, Head Start, the migrant worker summer school program and the annual Nature Walk Summer Camp through Easter Seals as well as on-going programs with area community centers and schools bears testament to the Park District's ability to reach and teach - it is one of the things that we do best!

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**Project Budget:**

	<b>Federal Share Requested (\$)</b>	<b>Applicant's Share (\$)</b>
<b>Personnel:</b>	0	65,000
<b>Fringe:</b>	0	19,500
<b>Travel:</b>	0	3,000
<b>Equipment:</b>	0	7,000
<b>Supplies:</b>	0	500
<b>Contracts:</b>	110,000	0
<b>Construction:</b>	0	5,000
<b>Other:</b>	5,000	5,000
<b>Total Direct Costs:</b>	115,000	105,000
<b>Indirect Costs:</b>	0	0
<b>Total:</b>	115,000	105,000
<b>Projected Income:</b>	0	0

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**Funding by Other Organizations (Names, Amounts, Description of Commitments):**

The Great Lakes region is home to many corporate headquarters for a number of both Fortune 100 and Fortune 500 companies, as well as major retail markets, health organizations and educational institutions. Wild! will provide an exceptional advertising opportunity of greater market exposure for the program's sponsors, advertisers and underwriters. Fox36 broadcasting network has committed \$5,000 to assist in the production of the initial program, and, because it has pledged that this program will be a linchpin in its community outreach programming, Fox36 intends to continue in-kind assistance. The marketing plan for Wild! which is already underway, includes an aggressive campaign to sell advertising opportunities to the following: First Energy, Dana Corporation, Columbia Gas of Ohio, St. Luke's Hospital, ProMedica, Mercy Health System, Owens-Illinois, Fifth Third Bank, Capital Bank, Charter One, Food Town, Kroger, Inc., Daimler-Chrysler, Corporation, as well as locally owned and operated businesses, area organizations, and individual donors.

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**Description of Collaboration/Community Based Support:**

To bring to the television viewing audience the most comprehensive, interesting, innovative and educational programming possible, Metroparks will rely on the vast resources within the Northwest Ohio area. Within the next year and a half, as research, marketing, programming and production begins, Metroparks will form alliances with diverse community based organizations, and in doing so, the television program will allow public access to and enhanced visibility for these groups. Community based support will come from The Nature Conservancy, the Division of Wildlife, the Division of Forestry, Lucas County Soil and Water Conservation District, Toledo City Parks and Recreation, Maumee Valley Heritage Corridor, Ducks Unlimited, the National Wild Turkey Federation, the Northwest Ohio Bass Masters, U.S. Fish and Wildlife, The Toledo Zoo, The Toledo Museum of Art, the Toledo - Lucas County Public Library, the Toledo Naturalist Association, Maumee Valley Audubon Society, Toledo Public Schools, Toledo Public Schools Natural Resource Program, suburban school districts, and Bowling Green State University. In addition, a solid base of trained volunteers, professional naturalists, historians, and other experts within the field will collaborate in the production of this 12-episode television series to educate and entertain the public in the areas of land preservation, historic restoration, and outdoor recreation for everyone.